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THE USE OF THE FUGUE IN THE MODERN ORATORIO

By

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THESIS

FOR THE

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IN

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THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

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DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF MUSIC IN MUSIC

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MODERN ORATORIO

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List of Oratorios examined

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Part I

INTRODUCTION

Before proceeding with the subject proper it will be necessary to have some concrete knowledge about the fugues.

Grove's "Dictionary of Music and Musicians" defines the fugue as a "movement in which a definite number of voices combine in stating and developing a single theme, the interest being cumulative."

The word "fugue" comes from the Latin verb, "fugare", which means to put to flight, the idea being that one voice of the fugue is pursuing the other voices. Every development of the fugue is more or less directly dependant upon the principle theme or subject. The main idea of the fugue is that of one voice contrasting with other voices. In order that there may be this necessary contrast a fugue must be written in a definite number of parts, at least two.

Fugues may be classified as:

1. Real
2. Tonal
3. Fughetta
4. Fugues of Imitation
5. Irregular--merely pieces in fugal style.

Every fugue must have:

I. A subject
II. An answer
III. May have a counter subject
IV. Sometimes a stretto

In addition to these constituents which, with the exception of the stretti, are absolutely necessary there are

other contrapuntal devices for the purpose of sustaining the interest such as:

V. The episode

VI. The codetta

VII. The pedal point

VIII. The coda

In general structure the fugue is made up of:

IX. Exposition

X. Development section

XI. Recapitulation.

I. The subject of a fugue is the chief theme or melody upon which the entire fugue is based. It should have the following basic characteristics:

(a) Moderate length.

(b) Freedom from modulations except in the dominant of the principal key.

(c) Should be easily recognized wherever it recurs.

(d) Following the rule of a melody, fugue-subjects may begin on any part of the measure but should generally end on an accent.

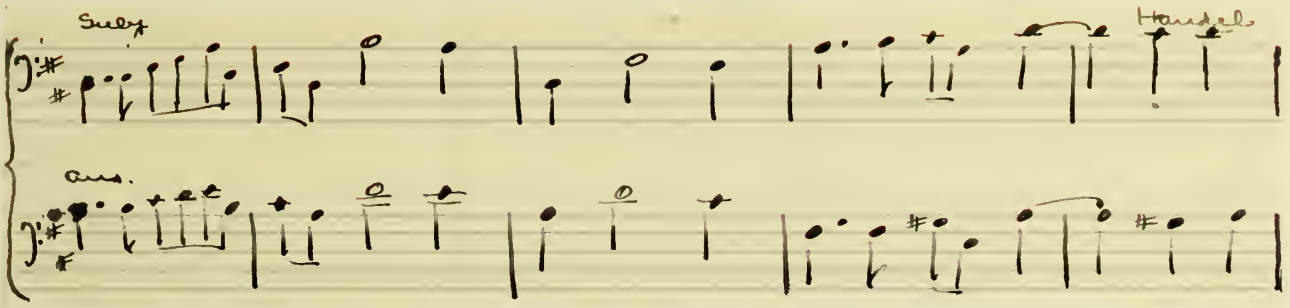
(e) Scale passages are frequent in fugue subjects.

II. The answer is primarily a transposition of the subject into the key of the perfect fifth above or fourth below the key of the subject. The relation of a subject to the answer determines the character of the fugue.

An Answer to a fugue may be real or tonal.

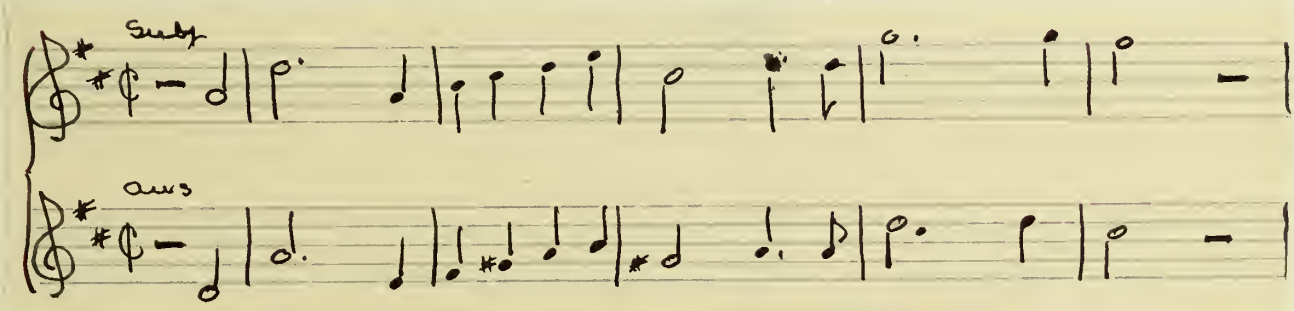
A Real Answer is an exact transposition of the subject one fifth above or a fourth below the original key.

Example--Real Fugue



A Tonal Answer is a modified transposition of the subject which really resolves into answering the dominant by tonic and the tonic by the dominant.

Example--Tonal Fugue



III. THE COUNTER-SUBJECT is a supplementary melody intended to accompany the subject and answer. As the accompaniment must sometimes be placed in an upper and sometimes a lower part it is necessary that the subject and counter-subject be written in invertible counterpoint, generally of the octave. The counter-subject (or second subject) of a double fugue is in all respects as important as its companion subject.

IV. THE STRETTO--Stretto is derived from the Italian verb "stringere" meaning to bind together. It is the narrowing of the interval of time between the subject and answer. In the Stretto the answer may lead and the subject reply a fifth below, the answer may be at the octave or both subject and answer may be used

in augmentation, diminuition or contrary motion. All voices of the fugue may take part in the stretto,

V. THE CODETTA. When the subject and answer have been developed to some extent other voices enter in turn with the subject or answer alternately; sometimes there is a duet between two voices lengthened by a few measures before the entry of the third voice: This is a little digression and is called a Codetta.

VI. THE EPISODE. Intermediate matter introduced as contrast and relief to the more essential parts of the fugue is called an Episode. Frequently the Episode is the means of modulation. The best episodes are those founded on some motif previously employed in the fugue. The individuality of the composer is often exerted in the Episode.

VII. THE PEDAL is a sustained tone, usually on the dominant or the tonic and sometimes both (in which case the tonic must appear last) upon which points of imitation are constructed.

VIII. THE CODA. Coda is the Italian for tail, and the part of music to which it is ascribed is expressive of it. The Coda is used in a fugue to give a rigorous ending to the entire composition.

IX. THE EXPOSITION of a fugue serves as an introduction of the parts, of which there may be from two to eight. After all the parts have entered there is a short digression or Episode which gives interest to the composition and keeps it from becoming monotonous.

X. THE COUNTER-EXPOSITION or DEVELOPMENT section is a sort of reflected exposition in which the subject and answer accompanied by the counter-subject are presented according to some

modulatory scheme as suits the taste of the composer. This is the largest division of the fugue.

XI. THE RECAPITULATION is what the word implies. In this section the themes are announced in the original key.

Types of Fugues:

1. A Real fugue is one in which the answer is throughout at the interval of a fifth above or fourth below the subject.

2. A Tonal fugue is one in which the answer deviates somewhat from the original subject.

3. A fugue of Imination is one in which the answer is always similar to the subject. In a fugue of this type the composer is at liberty to introduce changes and curtail the answer as he sees fit. In a fugue of Imitation the answer may be in tonic, dominant, sub-dominant, mediant, sub-mediant, super-tonic, leading-tone or their compounds.

4. The Fughetta is a short fugue usually not over twenty measures. Many four-part vocal fugues which are to be found in cantatas and oratorios are of this type.

5. Irregular Fugues or pieces in fugal style which do not adhere to all the characteristics of a real or tonal fugue but still have the ear-marks of a fugue.

A Choral is often introduced into a fugue as a free part in the chorus "But our Lord," in Mendelssohn's "St. Paul."

J. S. Dwight has written the following on the aesthetic character or expression of the fugue in his article on the Fugues of Bach:-

"A fugue is the unfolding of a musical germ; it is the

development, the opening out, the organic growth of a musical thought, first lying latent in any simple phrase, according to its innate law. In its effect, as you get it on the grand scale from a multitudinous chorus, it is the theme echoed back reflected from all quarters, till it becomes all-pervading. As a form of art it is analogous to Gothic architecture."[1]

"The fugue is a comparatively modern development of what we now call canon, which during the sixteenth century was called fuga.[2]

Johann Joseph Fux, a native of Gratz, Styria, who lived from 1660 to 1741 and who was a master of composition and interweaving contrapuntal forms, was perhaps the earliest composer to develop the fugue.[3] The "Gradus ad Parnossum," a treatise on the theory and practice of composition, was studied by Cherubini, Mozart, Haydn, not to mention Bach to whom may be given much of the credit for the development and perfection of the fugue form.

Part II

List of Fugues

Beethoven, Ludwig Van

"Mount of Olives"

5 choruses

Chorus #15, "Hallelujah"

Tonal fugue

Fugue theme "Praise the Lord, ye bright angelic choirs,

1. "Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians" p. 34.
2. The American History and Encyclopedia of Music, p. 217.
3. Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians.

in holy songs of Joy."

Voice entries--S. A. T. B.

Stretto B. S. Measure 13 and 14

46 measures long.

Stretto all voices - 24 - 27.

Benedict, Jules

"St. Peter"

23 choruses

Chorus #2, "They that go down to the sea in ships."

Tonal fughetta

Fughetta theme "They that go down to the sea in ships."

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Fughetta 16 measures in length.

Chorus #22, "Praise ye the Lord"

Fugal imitation.

Fugue theme "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons and all deeps"

Voice entries--S. A. T. B.

Imitation 8 measures in length.

Bennett, William Sterndale

"The Woman of Samaria"

9 choruses

Chorus #13, "Blessed, blessed be the Lord God"

Tonal fugue[1]

Fugue theme "And blessed, blessed be the Lord God of Israel"

[1]. See appendix, example #7.

Voice entries--S. A. T. B.

Fugue 123 measures in length

Coda--Lomophonic style--23 measures.

Chorus #19, "Now we believe"

Real fugue

Fugue theme "Now we believe, we now, we believe"

Voice entries--S. T. A. B.

59 measures in length

Stretto all voices 14 to 18.

Dvorak, Antonin

"St. Ludmila"

20 choruses

Chorus #17, "Now all gives way together"

Tonal fugue

Fugal theme "Now all gives way together, there is chaos and all within a gulf of sinking, and all is only mourning and straying in darkness."

Voice entries--T. A. S. B.

Three voices, T. A. S. carry fugue for 18 measures when bass enters.

Chorus #45, "Mighty Lord to us be gracious"

Tonal fugue

Principal fugue theme "Lord be gracious."

Counter-subject theme "Mighty Lord to us be gracious, be thou gracious."

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Fugue 37 measures in length.

Costa, Michael

"Eli"

17 choruses

Chorus #10, "The Lord is good"

Tonal fugue

Fugue theme "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble and he knoweth them that trust in him."

Voice entries--S. A. T. B.

Fugue 78 measures in length

Stretto 21-25 - B. T. A. S.

Chorus #6, "Blessed be the Lord"

Tonal fugue

Fugue theme "Amen"

Voice entries--T. A. S. B.

Fugue 107 measures in length

Homophonic episode 67-69

Homophonic coda 96-107

Chorus #35, "Hold not thy peace"

Real fugue

Fugue theme "So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm."

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Fugue 129 measures in length

Counter-subject theme "So persecute them with thy tempest and make them afraid with thy storm."

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Fugue 129 measures in length

Counter-subject theme "So persecute them with thy tempest and make them afraid with thy storm."

Measures 52-55 homophonic episode to key of sub-dominant

Measures 74-129 polyphonic Coda.

Chorus #49, "Hallelujah"

Tonal fugue

Fugue theme "Hallelujah, amen, amen, Hallelujah amen."

Voice entries--T. B. S. A.

Fugue 116 measures in length

32 measures polyphonic Coda

Elgar, Edward

"The Kingdom"

21 choruses

Chorus #21, "Lord, behold their threatenings"

Tonal fugue

Fugue theme "Lord, thoud didst make heaven."

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Fugue 22 measures in length

Elgar, Edward

"The Dream of Gerontius"

13 choruses

Chorus #32, "Demons"

Tonal fughetta

Fughetta theme "Dispossessed, aside thrust, chuck'd down by

sheer might of a despot's will."

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Fughetta 12 measures in length

Gounod, Charles

"The Redemption"

18 choruses

Chorus #3, "Hymn of the Apostles"

Real fughetta[1]

Fughetta theme "He, like the Holy Ghost, is one with God the Father in everlasting Trinity."

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Fughetta 15 measures in length

Haydn, Franz Joseph

"The Seasons"

13 choruses

Chorus #24, "What e'er the blossom'd Spring"

Tonal fughetta

Fughetta theme "From thee O Industry, from thee springs every good"

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Fughetta 19 measures in length

Haydn, Franz Joseph

"The Creation"

10 choruses

1. See appendix, example #6

Chorus #3, "Despairing, cursing rage"

Tonal fugue

Fugue theme "Despairing, cursing rage attends their rapid fall"

Fughetta 18 measures in length

Voice entries--B. T. S. A.

Chorus #11, Awake the harp"

Tonal fugue[1]

Fugue theme "For He both heaven and earth and earth has clothed in stately dress"

Fugue 45 measures in length

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Measure 27--Stretto in all voices

Chorus #14, "The heavens are telling"

Real fugue

Fugue theme "The wonder of his works displays the firmament"

Voice entries--B. T. S. A.

Fugue 35 measures in length

Stretto in all voices measure 12

Chorus #27, "Achieved is the glorious work"

Tonal fughetta

Fughetta theme "In lofty strains let us rejoice"

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Fughetta 6 measures in length

Chorus #33, "Sing the Lord, ye voices all"

1. See appendix, example #8

Tonal fugue

Fugue theme "Jehovah's praise forever shall endure."

Voice entries--T. B. S. A.

Counter theme "A-men"

Stretto measure 13 and 14 in tenor and bass

Measure 46-58 principal theme in A. S. and B. with counter-subject "Amen"

Mendelssohn, Felix

#Elijah"

22 choruses

Chorus #1, "Help, Lord!"

Tonal fugue

Fugue theme "The harvest now is over, the summer days are gone; and yet no power cometh to help us."

Voice entries--T. S. A. B.

Fugue 49 measures in length

Measure 42-49 - homophonic Coda

Chorus #22, "Be not afraid"

Tonal fugue

Fugal theme "Though thousands languish and fall beside thee and tens of thousands around thee perish"

Voice entries--A. S. B. T.

Fugue 82 measures in length.

Stretto measures 19-21, A. B. S.

Polyphonic Coda 40-82.

Mendelssohn, Felix

"St. Paul"

20 choruses

Chorus #23, "The Nations are now the Lord's"

Real fugue[1]

Fugal theme "For all the Gentiles, all the Gentiles come before thee"

Voice entries--T. A. 1st S. 2nd S. B.

Stretto 1st S. measure 16

Polyphonic episode 41-52

Second theme "Now are made the glorious law and judgments"

Voice entries--1st S. T. A. B. 2nd S.

Reappearance 1st theme-measure 105

Homophonic Coda measure 139-160

Fugue 160 measures long

Chorus #36, "But our God abideth"

Real fugue with corale sung by second soprano

Fugal theme "But our God abideth in heaven, high in heaven."

Corale enters in measure 20 second soprano part

Measure 98-105 homophonic Coda

Fugue 105 measures long

Chorus #44, "Not only with Him."

Tonal fugue

Fugal theme, "Bless thou the Lord, O my soul and all within me bless his holy name."

Voice entries--S. A. T. B.

1. See appendix, example #1.

Homophonic episode 33-34

Second theme "All ye his angels bless ye the Lord."

Voice entries--S. A. T. B.

Fugue 59 measures long.

Measures 54-59 homophonic Coda.

Macfarren, Walter

"St. John the Baptist"

7 choruses

Chorus #2, "Behold I will send my messinger."

Fugal style.

Fugue theme "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children"

Voice entries--A. S. B. T.

Fugal imitation 55 measures in length.

Chorus #10, "My soul praise the Lord"

Tonal fugue.

Fugue theme "My soul praise the Lord, Speak good of his name.

Voice entries--S. A. T. B.

Fugue 73 measures in length.

Mackenzie, A. C.

"The Rose of Sharon"

19 choruses

Real fugue

Chorus #54, "Sing, sing O heavens and be joyful"

Fugue theme "For the Lord hath comforted his people."

Voice entries--T. A. S. B.

Fugue 38 measures long.

Patten, Willard

"Isaiah"

11 choruses.

Chorus #5, "The Lord sent a word"

Tonal fugue.

Fugue theme "The Lord sent a word unto Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel."

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Fugue 50 measures in length.

Stretto- measure 33-36 in T. A. B. S.

Homophonic Coda measure 36-47.

Rubinstein, Anton

"Paradise Lost"

8 choruses

Chorus #9, "Clear resounded the trumpets of heaven."

Tonal fugue.

Fugue theme "Praise the Almighty One."

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Fugue 69 measures in length.

Rubinstein, Anton

"The Tower of Babel"

12 choruses

Chorus of the people

Tonal fugue for double chorus[1]

Fugue theme "Ye must to our great God pay homage and confess his boundless might."

Counter theme "Bow before your God! No, nevermore, nevermore, no!"

Voice entries--B. T. A. S. Second chorus fugue 33 measures.

Rossini, Sioacchino

"Stabat Mater"

4 choruses.

Chorus #10, "To him be glory evermore."

Real fugue.[2]

Fugue subject "To him be glory evermore, amen"

Counter subject "Amen"

Voice entries--S. A. T. B.

Fugue 108 measures in length.

Stretto all voices 64-65.

Homophonic episode 94-97

Subject original key 98.

Polyphonic Coda 101-108.

Schumann, Robert

"Paradise and the Peri"

6 choruses

Chorus #9 "For blood must holy be."

1. See appendix, example #1
2. See appendix, example #5

Tonal fugue

Fugue theme "For blood must holy be."

Fugue 56 measures long.

Voice entries--T. A. S. B.

Spohr, Ludwig

"The Last Judgment"

9 choruses.

Chorus #10, "Blessing honour glory and power."

Tonal fugue.

Fugue theme "Blessing, honour, glory and power."

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Fugue 41 measures long.

Chorus #22, "Great and wonderful"

Real fugue.

Fugue theme "Great and wonderful are all thy works, O thou Almighty God."

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Polyphonic episode measures 20- 25

Second theme "How just and true are all thy commandments O Jehovah!"

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Measures 37-56 third theme "Thine be the kingdom, power and glory forever and evermore."

Organ point on V 49-56.

Measures 50-89 polyphonic Coda.

Spohr, Ludwig

"Calvary"

12 choruses

Chorus #11, "O thou Eternal God."

Tonal fugue.

Fugue subject "Thou art his refuge, mighty in peril to save him."

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Polyphonic Coda 56-90

Chorus #15 "O that men could praise the Lord."

Real fugue.

Fugal theme "O that men would therefore praise the Lord"

Voice entries--T. A. S. B.

Second theme measure 83-96 "And declare the wonders that he doeth to the children of men."

Fugue 96 measures long.

Sullivan, Arthur

"The Prodigal Son"

6 choruses.

Chorus #18, "Thou, O Lord art the father"

Tonal fugue

Fugue theme "Hallelujah"

Fugue 33 measures long.

Sullivan, Arthur

"The Light of the World"

17 choruses

Chorus #15, "I will pour out my Spirit"

Tonal fugue.

Fugue subject, "He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord."

Homophonic episode measure 17-34

Return of subject

Chorus #14 "The Spirit of God"

Tonal fughetta.

Fughetta theme "Whence hath this man wisdom and these mighty works?"

Voice entries--B. T. A. S.

Fughetta 15 measures long.

Chorus #25, "Hosanna."

Tonal fugue

Trio 18 2nd soprano and alto.

Episode 11-16 entrance of 2nd theme "Blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Chorus #42, "Him hath the Lord exalted."

Tonal fugue

Fugal theme "Now is come the salvation and strength and the kingdom of your God and the power of his Christ."

Voice entries--A. S. B. T.

Spretto all voices measure 27.

Organ point measures 48-54 on tonic.

Verdi, Guiseppe

"Requiem"

9 choruses

Chorus #4, "Sanctus"

Real fugue[1]

Fugal theme "Holy, holy holy, Lord God of Sabaoth"

Voice entries--Soprano--1st Choir

Soprano--2nd Choir

Contralto--1st Choir

Tenor --1st Choir

Contralto--2nd Choir

Tenor --2nd Choir

Bass --1st Choir

Bass --2nd Choir

Measures 35-27-polyphonic episode.

Measure 38 new theme enters--"Blessed be he that comes in the name of the Lord."

Chorus #7, "Lord deliver my Soul"

Tonal fugue

Fugue subject "Lord deliver my soul from the doom of the external death in the great day of judgment."

Voice entries--A. S. B. T.

Fugue 176 measures long

1. See appendix, examples #3 and #4.

Part III

Conclusion

To the casual reader the word, fugue, means little or nothing; it is hoped that the introduction has given some idea of its main characteristics.

The strict fugue,--ie--that of strict imitation at the fifth above or a fourth below the subject as announced, is very fast disappearing, from choral works at least, and a canonic imitation which in the early stages of musical composition was called fuga is taking its place.

In Haydn's oratorios "The Seasons" and "The Creation", which mark the beginnings of modern oratorio as we now know it, there is very little of the fugal element. Mendelssohn who was a great student of Bach who in turn perfected the fugal form in its strictest sense uses some fugal treatment but does not develop his themes to any considerable length.

In all the oratorios examined there was never more than one fugue of any length. This fugue was most often toward the close of the composition and had for its principal theme phrases which were more emphatic after the fugal repetition.

The extremely modern composers, as for example Saint-Saens, do not use the strict fugue at all but employ rather, the canonic repetition.

Modern composers are tending toward a greater realism in their music just as literary creators are giving more attention to content and less to form. Thus, there is every indication that the fugue as a strict form of musical composition will

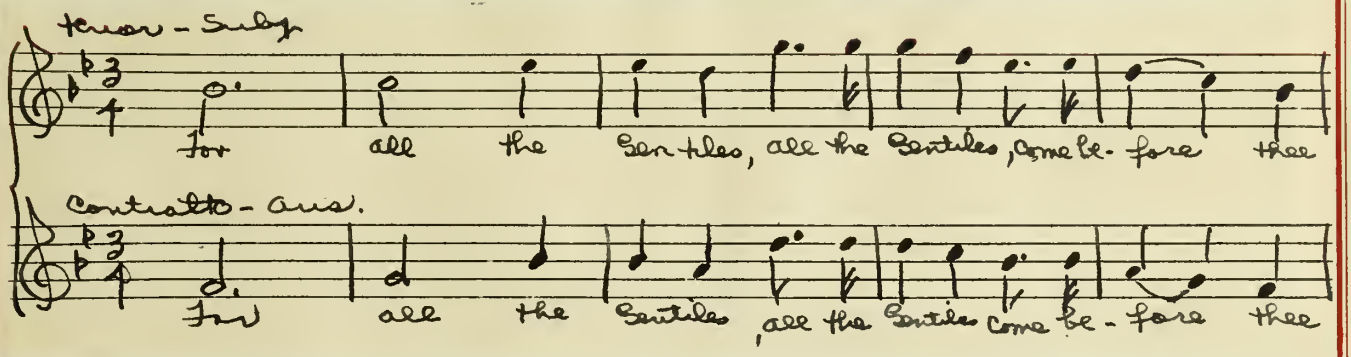
gradually disappear.

Part IV

Examples of fugues

1. Mendelssohn "St. Paul"

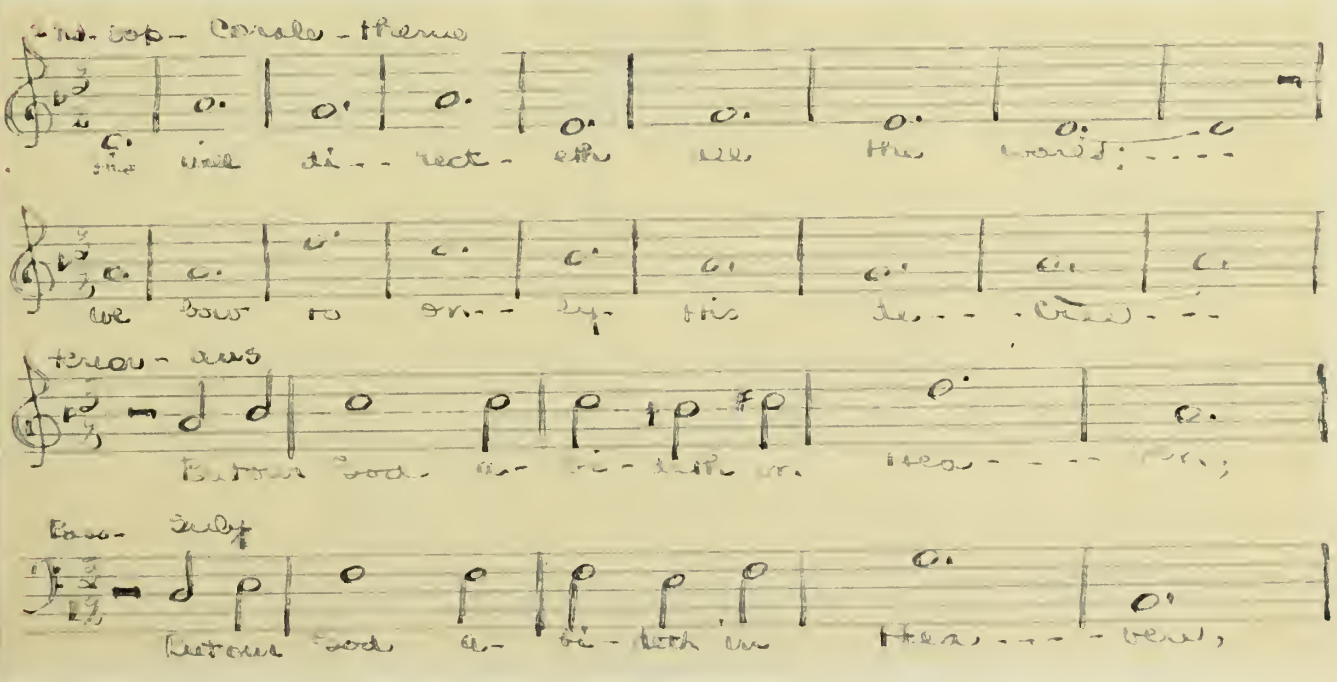
Real fugue--Chorus #23, "The Nations are now the Lord's"



2. Mendelssohn "St. Paul"

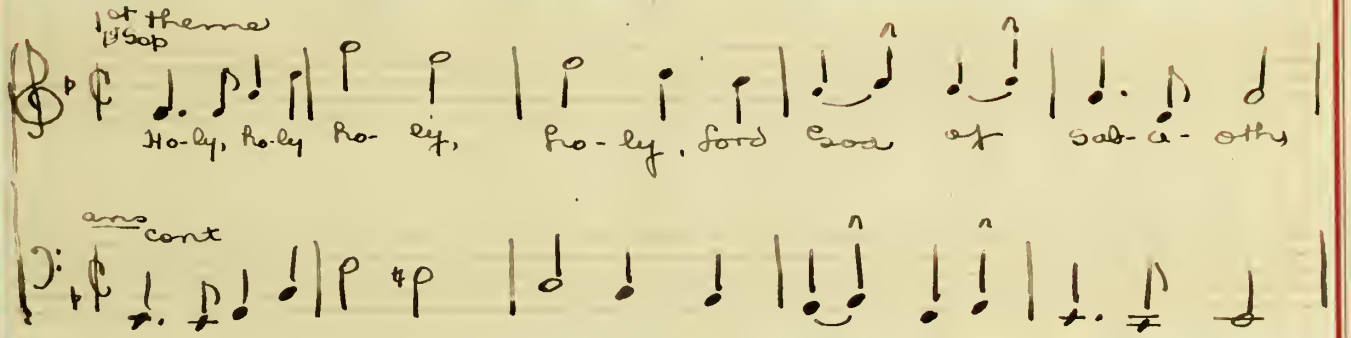
Chorus #36, "But our God abideth"

Real fugue

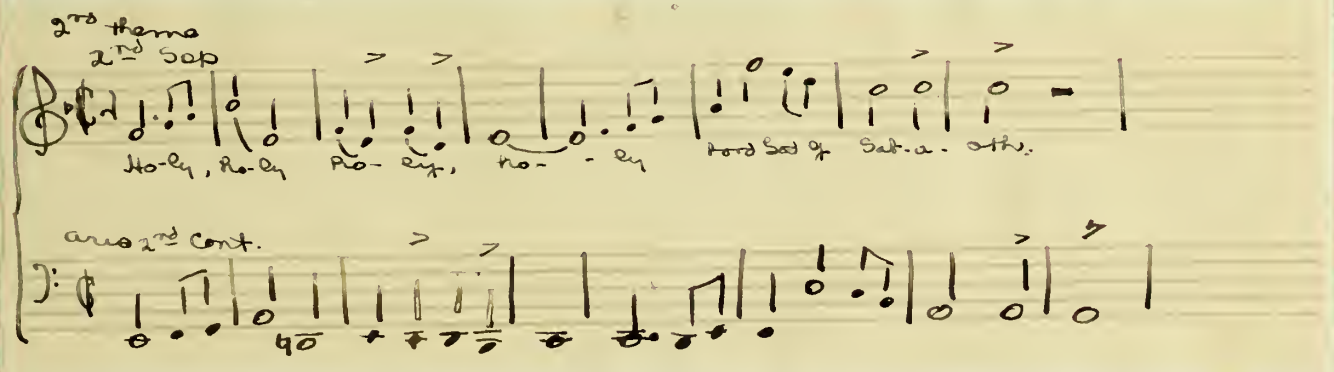


3. Fugue for double-chorus from

Verdi "Requiem" Chorus #4, "Sanctus"



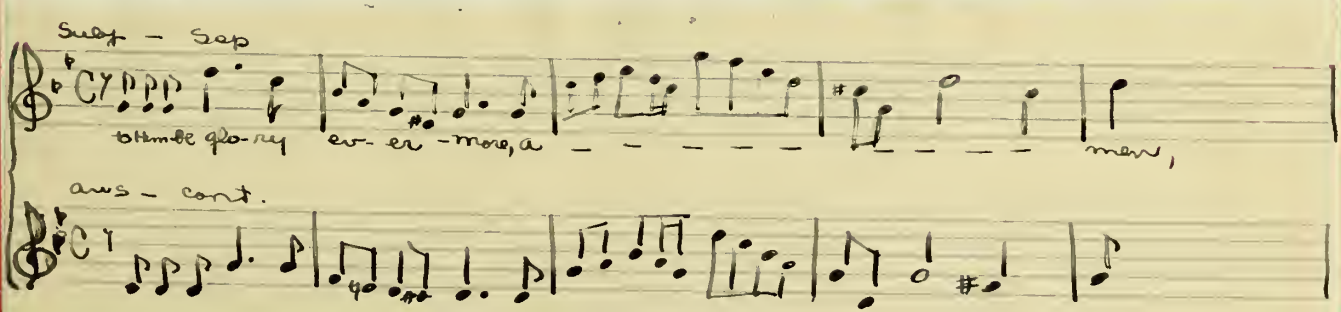
4.



5. Rossini "Stabat Mater"

Tonal

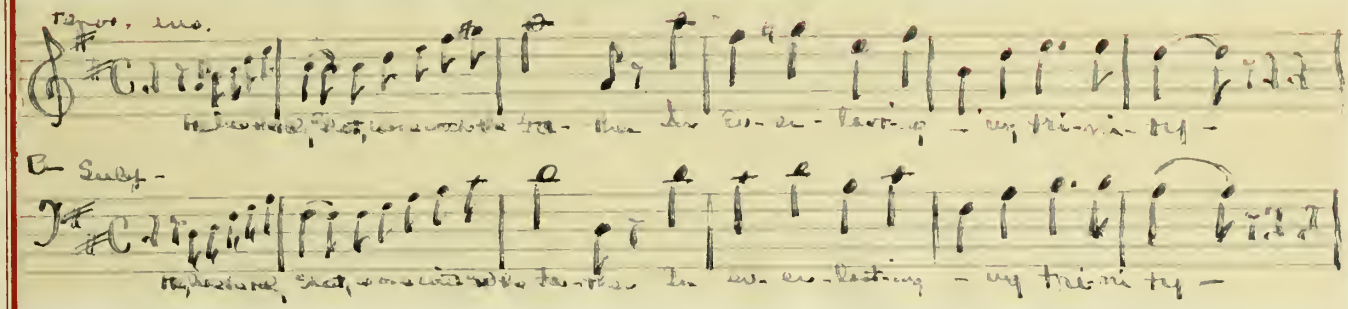
~~Real~~ fugue. Chorus #10, "To Him be glory evermore"



6. Gounod "The Redemption"

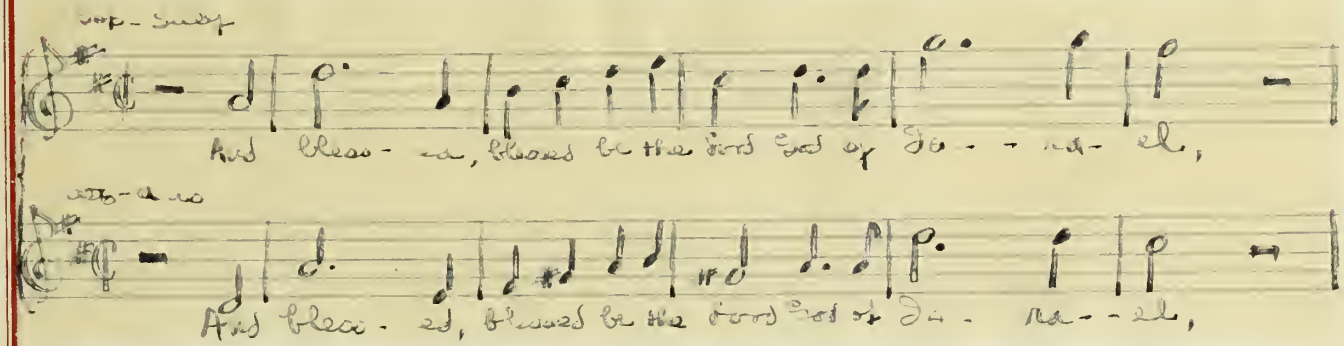
Real fughetta. Chorus #3, Part III

"Chorus of the Apostles"



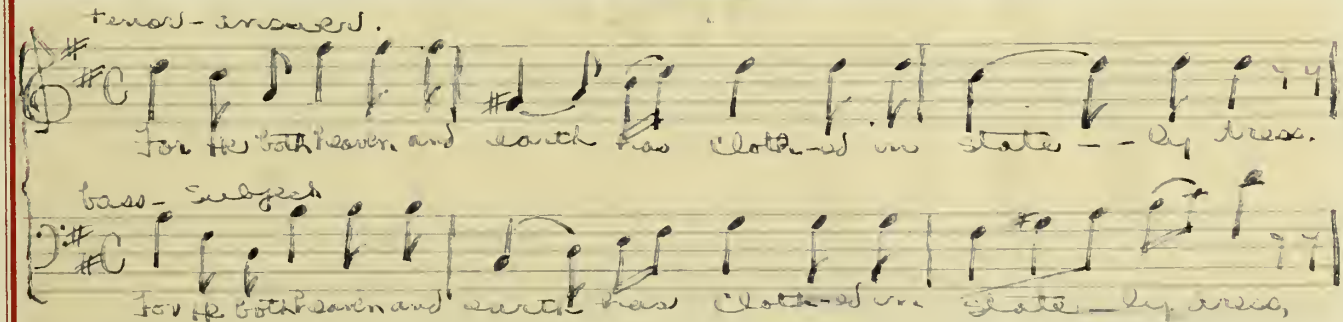
7. Bennett "The Woman of Samaria"

Tonal fugue. Chorus #22, "And blessed, blessed be the Lord"



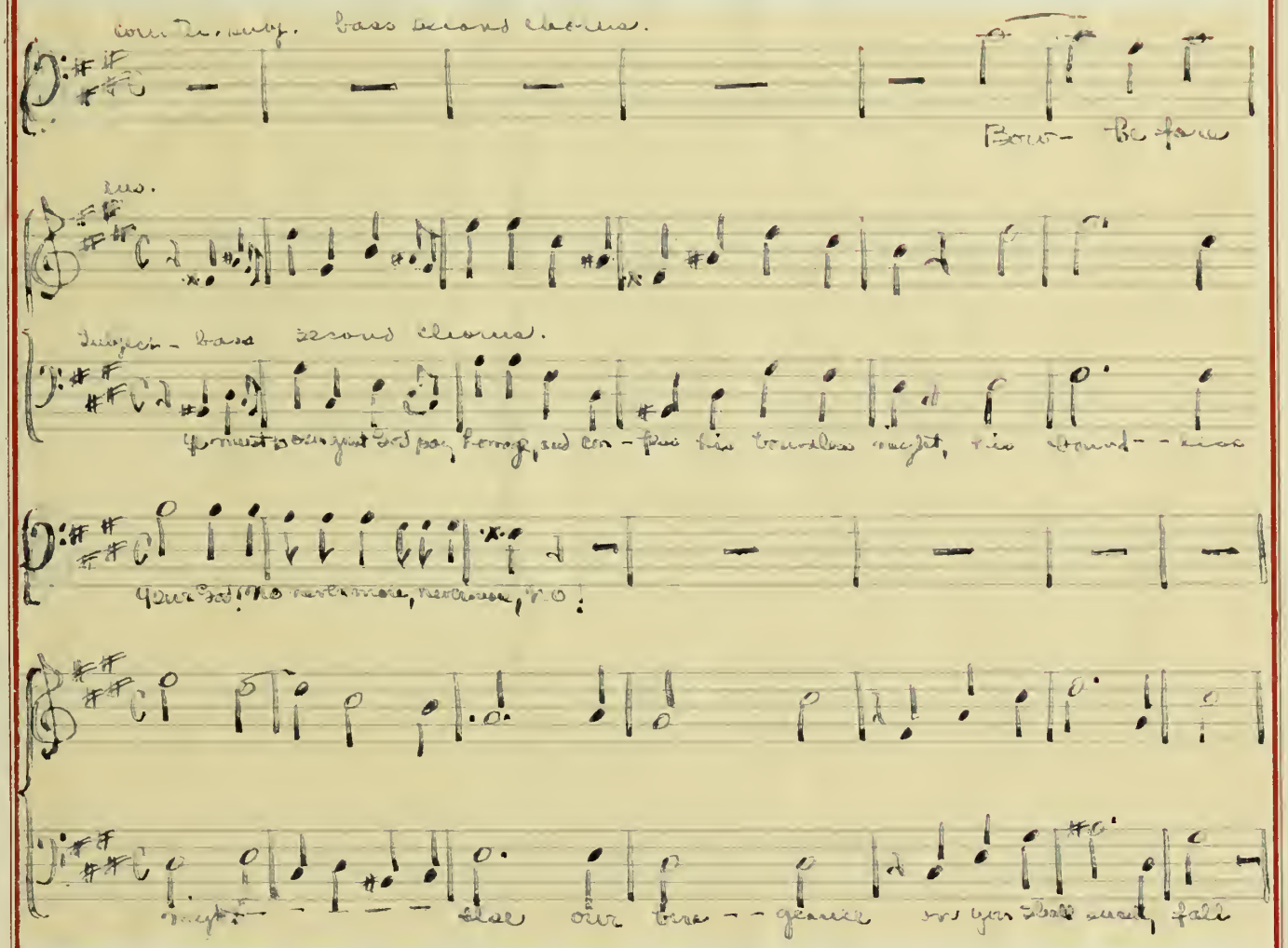
8. Haydn "The Creation"

Tonal fugue. Chorus #11, "Awake the Harp"



9. Rubinstein "The Tower of Babel

Tonal fugue. "Chorus of the people"



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